

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAR ES 03660 081228Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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SS-15 USIA-06 /069 W
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R 081031Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6168
INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAR ES SALAAM 3660

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR, PGOV, NI, TZ
SUBJECT:TANZANIAN ATTITUDES TOWARD NIGERIA

REF: STATE 208244

SUMMARY: A VISIT BY NIGERIAN HEAD OF STATE OBASANJO SEPTEMBER
1 - 3 INDICATES TANZANIAN - NIGERIAN RELATIONS HAVE IMPROVED
CONSIDERABLY SINCE LOW POINT FOLLOWING TANZANIA'S RECOGNITION OF
BIAFRA. TANGOV RESPECT FOR NIGERIAN POWER AS POSSIBLY
IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA HELPS CANCEL OUT MISGIVINGS
ABOUT CLOSER TIES WITH A NON-SOCIALIST, MILITARY REGIME. NYERERE
APPEARS TO BE SEEKING NIGERIAN INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA
TO GIVE ADDITIONAL FORCE TO EFFORTS OF THE FRONTLINE STATES. AT
THE SAME TIME HE WOULD NOT WANT HIS INFLUENCE OVER SOUTHERN
AFRICAN SOLUTIONS TO BE UNDERCUT BY NIGERIA. END SUMMARY.

1. NIGERIAN HEAD OF STATE OLUSEGUN OBASANJO WAS HAILED
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BY TANGOV-OWNED PRESS AS "A HERO OF THE AFRICAN REVOLUTION" AT
THE BEGINNING OF HIS RECENT 3-DAY VISIT. PRESS DECLARED THAT
"IN THE STRUGGLE FOR THE LIBERATION OF AFRICA, HE HAS MADE THE
FULL WEIGHT OF NIGERIA FELT ON THE SIDE OF THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS."

2. OBASANJO'S TRIP SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN ALMOST COMPLETELY
DEVOTED TO OBTAINING A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEMS OF

LIBERATING SOUTHERN AFRICA. IT FOLLOWED A STATE VISIT BY NYERERE TO NIGERIA IN NOVEMBER 1976. IN A SPEECH WELCOMING OBASANJO, NYERERE SAID CLEARLY THAT HIS WAS NOT A RETURN STATE VISIT. THIS IMPLIES THAT IT WAS A BUSINESS TRIP FOR A SPECIFIC PURPOSE, SIMILAR TO THE CONSULTATIONS HELD BY FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS. NYERERE EXPRESSED PLEASURE WITH NIGERIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO AFRICAN LIBERATION. OBASANJO'S REPLY PRAISED TANZANIA'S EFFORTS IN THE SAME CAUSE AND AFFIRMED NIGERIA'S CONTINUED SUPPORT.

3. A FINAL COMMUNIQUE EXPRESSED THE TWO STATES' TOTAL COMMITMENT TO THE STRUGGLE "TO ACHIEVE LIBERTY, JUSTICE, AND DIGNITY FOR ALL THE PEOPLE" IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. IT ALSO URGED AFRICAN STATES TO SETTLE PEACEFULLY "WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE OAU" HOSTILITIES WHICH DIVERTED THEIR ATTENTION FROM SOUTHERN AFRICA.

4. COMMENT: OBASANJO'S VISIT MARKS A HIGH-POINT IN THE EVOLUTION OF TANZANIAN-NIGERIAN RELATIONS SINCE THEIR DIFFERENCE OVER BIAFRA. SOUTHERN AFRICA APPEARS TO BE THE PRINCIPAL FACTOR BRINGING THEM CLOSER TOGETHER. NIGERIA GIVES THE IMPRESSION OF SEEKING A MORE IMPORTANT ROLE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA; AFRICAN PROTOCOL WOULD INDICATE THAT IT AT LEAST ATTEMPT TO COOPERATE WITH THE OAU-ANointed ORGANIZATION OF "FRONTLINE" STATES AND NYERERE, ITS CHAIRMAN. NYERERE SEEMS TO WELCOME A STRONG SUPPORTING ROLE FOR NIGERIA, BUT HE WOULD PROBABLY WANT TO BE SURE THAT OBASANJO DID NOT START COMPETING WITH HIS OWN
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INTERESTS.

5. TO NYERERE'S ESPECT FOR NIGERIAN POWER IS THUS ADDED AN APPRECIATION THAT NIGERIA CAN BE PERSUADED TO INVOLVE ITSELF SUBSTANTIALLY IN THE CAMPAIGN TO LIBERATE SOUTHERN AFRICA. IN NYERERE'S VIEW THIS MEANS THERE IS A CHANCE FOR NIGERIA'S OIL AND MILITARY STRENGTH TO BE USED IN HELPING TO FORCE SOUTHERN AFRICAN SOLUTIONS. IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO NYERERE TO HAVE SOME INFLUENCE OVER THIS FORCE TO HELP PRODUCE THE KINDS OF SOLUTIONS HE WANTS. ON THIS BASIS WE ESTIMATE THAT NYERERE WOULD WELCOME A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH NIGERIA ALTHOUGH THE NON-SOCIALIST, MILITARY CHARACTER OF ITS REGIME ARE PROBABLY NOT MUCH TO HIS LIKING.

6. THERE ARE NO INDICATIONS THAT OBASANJO'S VISIT WAS IN ANY WAY CONNECTED WITH REPORTED NIGERIAN EFFORTS (DAR ES SALAAM 2375 NOTAL) TO MEDIATE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN KENYA AND TANZANIA.

7. THIS CABLE DRAFTED BY POLITICAL OFFICER DAVID HALSTED.
SPAIN

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